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The fifth season of the University of Montana Children's Theater opens Friday, January 12, with an Oriental fantasy, "The Land of the Dragon," Firman H. Brown, chairman of the Department of Drama, said today.

Community children will be whisked back "to those days when there were dragons who could fly and men could speak to animals."

The play, directed by Beverly Jane Thomas, instructor in drama, will feature much pantomime and the stylized movement of Oriental drama. "The Land of the Dragon" was written by Madge Miller. Miss Miller has written several children's theater scripts and is known for her work in children's dramatics.

The production, to be staged in the University Theater on the U of M campus, features Kathy Duggins as Princess Jade Pure, a lovely maiden who is made to think she is ugly by her wicked aunt so that she will not be married and obtain the throne and the wicked aunt will become empress. The wicked aunt, Precious Harp, is played by Frances Morrow. Her conspirator, the Chancellor Covet Spring, is portrayed by Don Volk.

Road Wanderer, the hero of the play, who helps Jade Pure discover her beauty and escape from her aunt is played by Lester Hankinson. His faithful dragon, Small One, is played by Terri Doremus.

Mike Minor plays the farmer, Twenty-Fourth Cousin, and the maidens who serve and deceive Jade Pure are played by Rosalie Bracco, Sonja Leraas and Patti Swoboda.

The characters in the play who will help set the scene and become such things as trees, pools and walls are Aylett Wright, Rick Stokes, Bruce Saladen and Joan Syverson. David Herbert plays the State Manager.

The production is designed by Richard H. James, Designer and Technical Director for the Department of Drama. The Chinese costumes will be designed and executed by Teddy Ulmer. Technical Director for the production is Bob Cocetti.

The production will be presented Friday, January 12, at 8 p.m., Saturday, January 13, at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and Sunday, January 14, at 2 p.m.